

From: Don Ledford
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Settlement

I'm very disappointed with the settlement.

I been through several hi-tech startups and now own a small Software company located in Bellevue, WA. I've watched Microsoft grow from it's inception. Microsoft is a client and I have many friends who work for the company, but MS is clearly an abusive monopoly.

It has generated huge profits at the expense of consumers - simply compare the cost/performance of desktop hardware versus software in 1982 and today. And remember software does not have any significant manufacturing costs. The price of most MS software is not controlled by competitive pressure and MS execs would be doing a poor job of managing the company if they did not seek to maximize profits. MS's management will continue to use all of the company's resources to protect its profits and market position.

MS uses its monopoly position on the desktop and huge financial reserves to smother any innovation which might threaten its monopoly. Today all MS has to do to kill a new idea or fledgling company is simply mention a vague interest in that market. Venture capital will dry up immediately. VCs will not try to compete with Microsoft's monopoly and finances.

So - I was stunned with the decision. Excuses such as:
"MS has a big impact on the US economy"
"If MS were split up we'd just have 2 big monopolies"
are simply wrong.

I'd like to know who's responsible for this decision.

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